



ALEXANDER CALDER



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ALEXANDER CALDER (1898-1976)

Prelude to Man-Eater

1945

Signed with the artist's monogram on the uppermost element, "CA"
sheet metal, wire, paint

59 x 42 x 18 in. (149.8 x 106.6 x 45.7 cm)



WATCH VIDEO

PROVENANCE

Estate of the Artist
M. Knoedler & Co., New York
Galerie Internazionale, Milan
Arnold Herstand & Co., New York
Meshulam Riklis, New York
Christies New York, May 1997, lot 127
Private Collection, acquired from the above sale
Christies New York, June 2001, lot 1103
Private Collection
Michelle Rosenfeld Gallery, New York
Private Collection

EXHIBITION

New York, Buchholz Gallery, *Alexander Calder*, November-December, 1945
Detroit, Detroit Institute of Fine Arts, *Origins of Modern Sculpture*, January - March, 1946
New York, M. Knoedler & Co., *Alexander Calder / Fernand Leger*, October 1979, p. 9, no. 5 (illustrated)
New York, M. Knoedler & Co., *Alexander Calder Standing Mobiles*, December 1980-January 1981
Barcelona, Spain, Fundacio Joan Miro, *Calder*, November 1997-February 1998, no. 73
Beverly Hills, California, Gagosian Gallery, *Alexander Calder*, May - June, 2003
Los Angeles, California, L&M Arts, *Alexander Calder*, April - June, 2012
Michelle Rosenfeld Gallery, New York, *Spring Group Show*, March - May 2013

— IMPORTANT FACTS

- *Prelude to Man-Eater* is a delicately balanced standing sculpture that responds to air currents, creating a constantly changing and dynamic visual experience.
- The present work is a formal study for a commissioned work, *Man-Eater With Pennants*. *Prelude to Man-Eater*, like the sculpture in MoMA, is designed to be viewed from multiple angles, encouraging viewers to walk around and interact with it.
- Often, these maquettes existed in the smaller size for decades before enlarging or simply existed at their size and never made into larger works.

DETAIL IMAGES







MARKET ANALYSIS

Alexander CALDER

Statistical Analysis

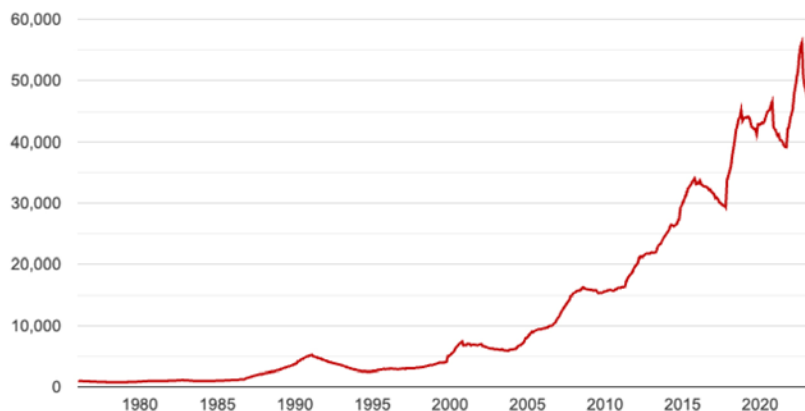
Number of lots	3052
Change from 1/1976 - 6/2023	+4032.3%
Compound Annual Growth Rate	8

Revaluation

Input value	0 USD
Revalue date	01/1976
Revaluation	0 USD

100% (median)-USD (Nominal terms)

AMR | Art
Market
Research

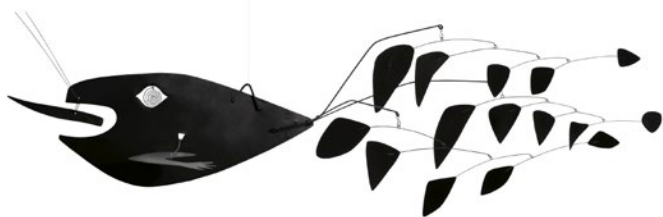


Alexander Calder's sculptural works rarely appear on the market. Mostly prints, drawings and wire sculptures emerge- very rarely do the mobile and stabile works.

There is a compound annual growth rate of 8% for Alexander Calder.

The institutional interest in Calder's work is rising, with new Asian and Middle Eastern museums seeking to own examples from the 1930's and 1940's.

TOP ART SOLD AT AUCTION



Poisson volant
1957
hanging mobile--painted sheet
metal, rod and wire
24 x 89 x 40 in.
(60.9 x 226.0 x 101.6 cm)

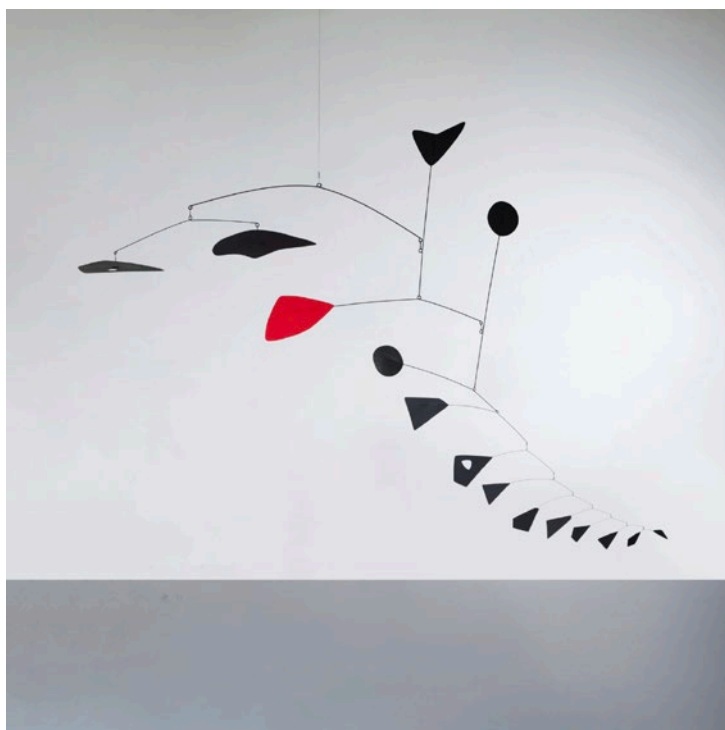
**Sold at Christie's New York:
July 2014 for \$25,925,000**

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Untitled
1949
painted sheet metal and wire
128 x 168 in. (325 x 426.7 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
November 2021 for \$19,682,000**

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TOP ART SOLD AT AUCTION



Lily of Force

1945

standing mobile--painted sheet
metal, rod and wire

91 ³/₄ x 81 x 89 in.

(233 x 205.7 x 226.1 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
November 2018 for \$18,562,500**

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COMPARABLE ART SOLD AT AUCTION



Untitled

1942

painted sheet metal, glass, wire
and string standing mobile

32 ¾ x 23 x 10 ½ in.

(83.2 x 58.4 x 26.7 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
May 2016 for \$8,314,000**

Smaller than *Cantilever*

Similar stabile composition/ format

Comparable date of execution

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Black II
1949
standing mobile--painted sheet
metal and wire
40 x 33 x 18 in.
(101.6 x 83.8 x 45.7 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:
November 2014 for \$4,309,000**

Created at the same time as our example

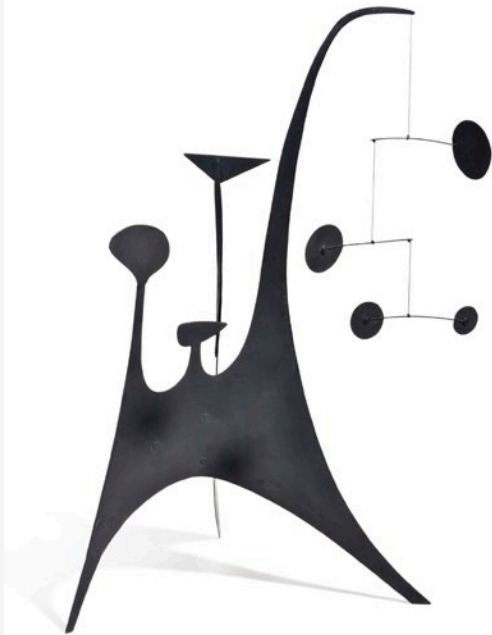
Comparable scale

Similar format composition

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COMPARABLE ART SOLD AT AUCTION



Stabile with Mobile Element
1940
standing mobile—sheet metal,
string and paint
24 x 24 x 15 in.
(60.9 x 60.9 x 38.1 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:
November 2015 for \$4,085,000**

Smaller than *Cantilever*

Similar stabile composition/ format

Comparable date of execution

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CALDER ART IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



The Museum of Modern Art New York

Man-Eater with Pennants

1945

Painted steel rods and sheet iron

168 x 360 in.

(425 x 915 cm)

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The Museum of Modern Art New York

Spider

1939

Painted sheet aluminum, steel rod,
and steel wire

80 ½ x 88 ½ x 36 ½ in.

(203.5 x 224.5 x 92.6 cm)

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CALDER ART IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



The Tate, London

Untitled

1937

painted steel stabile

90 x 102 in. (228 x 203 cm)

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Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Yucca

1941

painted sheet metal and wire

73 x 23 x 20 in.

(186.7 x 58.4 x 50.8 cm)

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“Above all, art should be fun.”

Alexander Calder

HISTORY



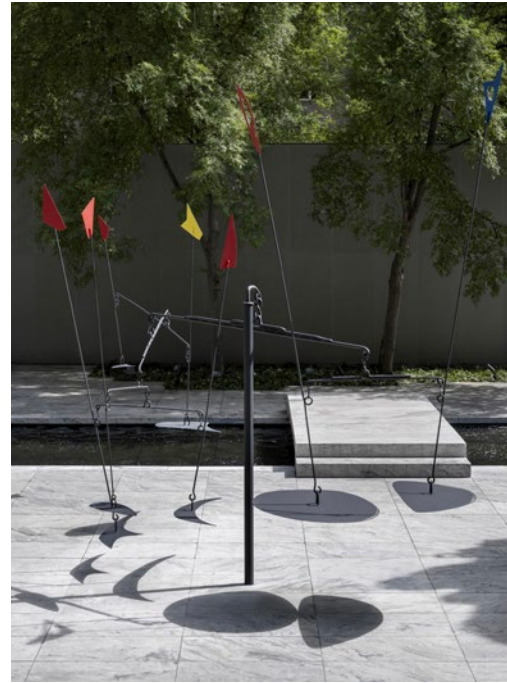
Alexander Calder, 1946

Alexander Calder was a key figure in the development of abstract sculpture and is renowned for his groundbreaking work in kinetic art; he is one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. *Prelude to Man-Eater* is a delicately balanced standing sculpture that responds to air currents, creating a constantly changing and dynamic visual experience.

Calder's standing mobiles were a result of his continuous experimentation with materials, form, and balance. Alfred Barr, the first director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, commissioned Calder to create a new standing mobile in 1945. The present work is a formal study for that

commissioned work, *Man-Eater With Pennants*. *Prelude to Man-Eater*, like the sculpture in MoMA, is designed to be viewed from multiple angles, encouraging viewers to walk around and interact with it. In both pieces, the different metal components move around a central post. Maquettes and studies played a vital role in Calder's practice as it gave him the opportunity to understand scale and balance before scaling up the piece. Often, these maquettes existed in the smaller size for decades before enlarging or simply existed at their size and never made into larger works. In *Prelude*, we can see Calder thinking more vertically compared to the final piece at MoMA.

Prelude to Man-Eater is also represented in Calder's preparatory drawing, *Sketches for Mobiles: Prelude to Man-Eater; Starfish; Octopus*, which is in the permanent collection of the Harvard Fogg Museum.



Alexander Calder, *Man-Eater With Pennants*, 1945
Museum of Modern Art, New York
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Alexander Calder, *Prelude to the Man-Eater; Starfish; Octopus*, 1945
Harvard Fogg Museum
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